



Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31st October 2020)

Project reference	25-010
Project title	A sustainable landscape for Critically Endangered primates and marginalised communities
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Vietnam
Lead organisation	Fauna & Flora International
Partner(s)	GreenViet
Project leader	Josh Kempinski
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	31 October 2020 HYR3
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.facebook.com/Fauna-Flora-International-Vietnam-Programme-1482856095365923

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

Activity 1.1 Preliminary consultations and FPIC with effected / bufferzone villages regarding a new PA in Kon Plong

Some important FPIC steps such as raising awareness for local people on wildlife conservation and forest protection, informing project activities and its impacts, participatory land use and resource use mapping have been conducted in over the last 12 months, including this reporting period.

A vital task in ongoing FPIC process, undertaken in the last 6 months, was to organise a string of village meetings from 25th September to 2nd October 2020. These consultations and FPIC voting event were designed to help local communities and authorities develop a grievance redress mechanism, including community grievance management boards to receive and report information (community feedback or grievances), related to project activities, to Fauna & Flora International and its counterpart the Kon Tum provincial Forest Protection Department. This intervention also forms part of [Activity 3.3] 'Participatory social impact assessment and development of a safeguards/indicators and monitoring system (based on a social impact assessment), and grievance redress mechanism (linked to the FPIC process)'.

To date, the communities continue to report their full support for the project, which combines forest protection (protected area development), land use planning and community forest development, and technical support to improve livelihood, e.g. via better market access. No grievances have been reported.

In combination with these community consultation meetings, the project also conducted raising awareness at the 9 target villages and consulted with local people to develop village-level forest protection commitments [Act. 1.13 Conservation agreements signed]. The main themes for raising awareness, developed in consultation with project partners and the communities themselves, were:

- (1) The use of slash-and-burn cultivation, (2) options old farm cultivation, (3) illegal logging – drivers and alternatives, (4) hunting and trapping of wild animals, for sale or subsistence.

These messages were primarily conveyed by GreenViet staff (Tran Huu Vy and A Siu) and FFI staff (Nguyen Thi Bich Ngoc and Nguyen Van Phuong) who have experience in communication and a deep knowledge of these local areas and issues.

There main steps in the have been taken as follows:

- Firstly, village leaders from 09 target villages (recently, two target villages has been merged into one so the project no longer has 10) and representatives from forest owners and forest protection forces were invited to one day of sharing and learning experiences. Those above topics were discussed in the meeting and the ideas and views of local actors were recorded. The project also consulted with participants on current local, i.e. customary or official, levels forest protection, commitment and grievance redress;
- Secondly, the project organised a meeting with each village management board (x9) to understand the current status of grievance redress, applying appropriate grievance mechanisms and the strengths/weakness of existing village regulations or forest protection commitments/actions in each village context. These management boards discussed the issues, and suggested a range of adjustments, including adding wildlife protection to the content of village-level regulations and also the government managed watershed Protection Forest (Thach Nham), with facilitation from the project team;
- Finally, the village heads presented the results of the discussions amongst each of the management boards, and listened for opinions and feedbacks from villagers to get final consensus. Representatives from forest protection forces (Thach Nham, and also FPD) were involved in these village meeting to witness. All discussions were written in the official meeting minutes (which are official documents under the Vietnamese system).

There were a total of 325 villagers (including 173 females) attending the 09 village meetings. Although most of community members have ability to recognise the grey-shanked douc langur as well as understand related laws in violations, there are still many community members could not identify the gibbons and lorries. Or distinguish them from macaques. This reflects our experience in the forest here, and across other sites in Vietnam, that gibbons are significantly more difficult to observe.

A small subset of community members continue activities that can and will negatively impact to the forest and have voiced concerns over the project activities because they are aware of their violations. As recorded by the project, currently, information regarding forest and wildlife protection is mainly reported by phone, through village meetings or FPIC-voter meetings. There have been no complaints, grievances or recommendations about project activities or other issues. Through discussions with village heads of the 09 target villages and each village management board, the project helped to develop grievance and information receiving forms, detailed guidance on implementation steps, process, people in charge of receiving complaints/feedback and a list of key contacts of local authorities for community members to reach whenever needed.

Activity 1.2 Develop a feasibility study for the new PA

From May to the end of July 2020, FFI and partner GreenViet had carried out three phases of the gibbon survey following a systematic methodology. Data collection was then finally completed for gibbon across the Kon Plong landscape, in Q3. The actual result from these initial surveys showed that there is an estimation, from the completed area of around 56-63 groups of northern yellow-cheeked gibbon (*Nomascus annamensis*) with 118-128 individuals. Final analysis is still ongoing with predicted number will be much higher than that; we estimate around 350-450 individuals. FFI has also finished the identification of priority terrestrial mammal (and to some degree bird) species recorded by camera traps Kon Plong. A summary is available and the full biodiversity report is being prepared, and it will be an important part of protected area feasibility study (in-prep.).

On 24th July, FFI co-chaired, with GreenViet and Kon Tum Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), and organised a conservation workshop titled "Biodiversity conservation

and sustainable livelihood development in Kon Plong” in Kon Tum City, Kon Tum Province. There were 87 representatives from all levels, from central to local governments as well as conservation organisations and local representation, in attendance at the workshop. The workshop presented the following topics:

1. Orientation and vision of forest management, protection and development in Kon Tum Province;
2. Highlights in current national forest planning, and how it relates to Kon Plong;
3. Biodiversity values of Kon Plong forest, current threats to forest and wildlife, the need of establishing a new protected area in Kon Plong, and commitments from the project and other conservation agencies;
4. Socio-economic development context, and associated natural resource use and resource use planning in Kon Plong District;
5. Policy issues and ‘political will’ in relation to the protected area gazettelement and the process;
6. Current difficulties and challenges of local forest management units (i.e. managers);
7. Lessons learned from the establishment of Saola Species and Habitat Conservation Area, Quang Nam Province.

The workshop also facilitated in-depth discussions around: The need and rationale for establishing a protected area in Kon Plong; Management context and management options of forest protection wildlife conservation (once the new protected area established in Kon Plong); Advantages, disadvantages and challenges in forest protection and management before and after establishing the new protected area; Boundary options of the potential new protected area, and the potential challenges and difficulties of each; The management board and human resources after establishing the new protected area; The effectiveness of (after establishing) the new protected area; and capacity needs and availability to manage the new protected area.

These topics (above) covered key aspects that the project is most concerned. Through the workshop, the project suggested some options for important forest areas for conservation in Kon Plong. With evidence on biodiversity provided, all the representatives agreed (or at least no-one disagreed) with the option of upgrading around 42,000ha of watershed Protection Forest and Production Forest, to Special Use Forest (which is the Vietnamese term for protected area). Of that total area, there will be around 33,000ha ‘requested’ from Thach Nham watershed Protection Forest adding at least 9,000ha of high conservation value, mature forest from Kon Plong Forestry Company. According to FFI’s data and analysis, with this option, at least 74% of Grey shanked douc, 62% of Northern buffed-cheeked gibbon, 73% of Owston's palm civet and 91% of Crested argus population in Kon Plong will be safeguarded, within the boundary of the new PA.

To reduce pressure on financial and human resources for Kon Tum Province, the idea put forward and agreed in the workshop is to maintain the current system, structure and facilities of Thach Nham Protection Forest Management Board as the new management board for the new protected area. The workshop was regarded as been very successful, with the agreement of all representatives in establishing the new PA for species and habitats in Kon Plong district.

The biggest concern from local stakeholders is how to secure and improve the livelihoods of local ethnic communities once the protected area is established, due to the dependence of some local people on forest resources. There is no clear solution or livelihood strategy defined within the workshop, although ideas were brainstormed, including the FFI (Darwin) concept, which has a core area (the new PA) buffered by community forests and enhanced local agriculture (productivity and resilience), as well as other enterprise options, like potential ecotourism. Many similar ideas were put forward, related for community forestry, commodities and tourism.

One important suggestion from a representative of Protection and Special use Forest Management Unit about the procedure for the gazettelement; that the project needs to work with DARD to register Kon Plong forest in the national and provincial list Special Use Forest plans for

the period 2021-2025. This is considered as a crucial and for the process, and should not wait until after the Feasibility Study, as we had been previously told. After the workshop, the project worked directly with Kon Tum DARD to deliver that critical step. After considering different factors, Kon Tum DARD have already sent an official letter to Provincial's People Committee (PPC) which listed 29,000 ha of Kon Plong forest (mostly belongs to Thach Nham PFMB) as proposed Special Use Forest, in the next 5 year forestry plan. Although this is not FFI's ideal expectation, it is still a success and FFI will keep assisting local stakeholders to gradually to extend the area and boundary of the final PA proposal, noting that it is multi-step process and approval is given at numerous points along the way. FFI is still confident that we can increase the area (ha) of forest coming into the PA from the Production Forest, which actually has the highest density of primates.

Activity 1.3: Training needs assessments/training courses developed towards the improvement of forest protection department management board capacity

From 11th to 15th May 2020, the project provided 5-day training on MapInfo for a group of 9 government staff (7 staff from Thach Nham Protection Forest Management Board, 1 staff from Kon Plong FPD, and 1 from Kon Plong Forestry Company). This training helped to build capacity of Thach Nham technical staff on mapping techniques, tools and software for improving quality of work, as future staff of the new SUF (PA).

In August-September 2020, Kon Plong FPD requested the project to provide another advanced training course on MapInfo. After several months of practicing, their technical staff is still struggling with using MapInfo and therefore they needed more instruction from the project staff on how to use GIS to edit and produce final maps. Carefully considering the need of local forest protection units in Kon Plong, the project decided to provide another training course on using QGIS (a more modern mapping software), plus further instruction on using MapInfo. QGIS has similar features to MapInfo while having more advanced tools, is far more widely used and is more easily integrating with SMART software – which will be soon applied in Kon Plong. However, it may take sometime for the staff to change from using MapInfo to QGIS. In addition, the project will also combine other necessary topics into the training course including identification of rare and threatened animal species in Kon Plong; introduction of SMART software and its benefits for forest management; developing and using monitoring form for forest patrol to improve the quality of forest patrol for forest protection force in Kon Plong.

This training course was planned in September-October but due to Covid-19 related delays, it has been delivered in November 2020 (see next report).

Activity 1.5 Collaborative Management Advisory Committee (MAC) institutional development including regulations, scope and memberships, and inclusive of MAC facilitation and technical advice (includes study tours)

In 2019, the project consulted with Mr. Vu – The head of Thach Nham FP Management Board (MB) to discuss the possibility of creating a Management Advisory Committee (MAC) in Kon Plong. According to Mr Vu's opinion, it is likely inappropriate to set up a new model like MAC because there is an existing Scientific and Technical Association in Kon Plong. However, the context of PA collaborative management through MAC is to ensure the engagement of local community representatives in decision making process of PA management. Coming along with the development of feasibility study for the PA gazettement, the project will build in PA collaborative management plan [Activity 1.4] and create a collaborative MAC.

To ensure community representatives engage in the MAC development process and eventual operations, the project organised an experience sharing and learning meeting with leaders/representatives from 10 (now 09) target villages on 26th September 2020 in Kon Plong. 13 representatives (all males) attended this meeting. The project facilitated initial discussion on the current village regulations on protecting the forest, adjustment to more suitable regulations to fit on each village's context; better ways for improving available grievance mechanism, and share experiences on how the community can be empowered to manage forests around their community(s). The project also consulted on the option of setting up a 'Union of Key Villages for Conservation', as a more locally appropriate 'MAC' model – and received the consensus of all village representatives. The aim of setting up this union is to connect 09 key villages in project

site for learning, exchanging experience, also being informed and consulted on project's activities, as we move towards and co-design the gazetted PA.

Thus at this stage the union could be considered as a proto version of a MAC which later will be built into the collaborative management structure of the new protected area. The members of this union will represent their communities in the context of collaborative management for the protected area designation. This union will have regular bi-annual meetings to update the status of applying new village regulations and grievance mechanism, project progress, and representing their communities in protected area management. It was proposed that this union include one leader, two vice leaders and 08 members. The project will provide further support and will facilitate the union to upgrade and be formalized, and latterly to become a formal MAC for the collaborative management of the new PA.

Activity 1.8: Selection of two 5-person Community Conservation Teams (CCT), from key 5-10 communities, established and trained on SMART patrols etc.

By May 2020, the project worked with Thach Nham PFMB to agree on final model of for their CCT (and thus a nascent CCT model for the new PA) and held meeting with key villages in Ngoc Tem Commune to select potential local members. The project developed criterias for selecting CCT members, including strength, health, at least Grade 9 literacy, enthusiasm, deep knowledge of forest and wildlife.

Within the current budget, the project will first pilot this model at Ngoc Tem Commune with the management of Thach Nham PFMB. The suitable model would be: Two small teams covering 12 villages in the commune. Each team will have one team leader, two core team members and one back-up member. This team has authority to enforce the law once they witness a violation in forest, collect snares and traps, confiscate hunting and logging tools, but only when accompanied by at least one Forest Guard from Thach Nham PFMB. Thach Nham PFMB will closely manage this team and collect data, with support from the project. The project, Thach Nham PFMB and key local people have agreed on the model, salary, tasks and a number of working days. The project also re-considered the need of creating this team in Kon Plong because the key threat to wild animals in Kon Plong forest is snaring and trapping. Through biodiversity surveys, the project staff witnessed huge numbers of snares placed in forest with some evidence of dead animals. Therefore, instead of creating a full 'community ranger' CCT, i.e. for patrolling and monitoring, the project agreed to change the focus and protocol of this team to focusing primarily on snares and traps removal, to reduce the threat to wildlife in Kon Plong forest.

Activity 1.11: Develop school-based awareness raising, sub-national workshops and study tours, and content for FFI's website and social media

From June 23rd to 30th and from July 14th to 16th 2020, the project conducted awareness raising activities at the 9 target villages on the intrinsic and local values of forest and wildlife in Kon Plong forest, how negative behaviors will impact these values, and importance of positive behaviors (what people should do to protect their forest and wildlife), and laws related to forest and wildlife violations.

The team of three project staff (2 from GreenViet and 1 from FFI) conducted this activity in collaboration with the Kon Plong Forest Protection Department (FPD), Thach Nham Protection Forest Management Board and Kon Plong Forestry Company. This activity combines with [Activity 1.17 - training for volunteers] with the aim to train volunteers who latter can develop communication activities at village level [also see Activity 1.17]. Project staff applied different methods to attract the attention and building the knowledge of local people, such as using presentations, videos, posters, quizzes (with small gifst), knowledge exchanges and discussions, during these village meeting. The main topics covered were on:

- Conservation values of forest and wildlife in Kon Plong
- Negative behaviours and impacts
- Positive behaviours and impacts
- Current laws related to hunting, logging and slash-and-burn forest conversion

In summary, there were 344 participants, of them 202 are males and 142 are females. Within the 9 targeted villages, only 19 participants from Vi Ring village attended meeting while at Dieck Tem there were 81 participants. By talking with local people, the project was made aware that many people from Vi Ring are engaged in illegal forest exploitation and therefore some members tried to avoid any meetings with authorities and rangers.

In general, this activity was successful as community members enthusiastically interacted during the meeting and gave positive feedback. Local FPD also played a key role to present a topic on current forestry law in each meeting. Together with FPD, the project had displayed 72 posters about some endangered wild animal species in Kon Plong, the ecosystem goods and services of Kon Plong forest, on the walls of community long-houses, local shop and schools in the target communes and villages.

In combining with [Act. 1.1 and 1.5], by the end of September 2020, the project had conducted another awareness raising activity for target groups. Those groups are village members who, by their own account, 'often go to the forest for wildlife trapping or collecting NTFPs', or have been undertaking illegal activities, and/or who rarely come to previous village awareness raising meetings. A total of 221 people (82 females, 139 males) invited to these group meetings were in attendance. The project staff used posters, illustrating images and natural resource maps to provide knowledge on key primates/species, existing and potential values of forest and the need for sustainability, to motivate these people to commit to reducing their negative impacts.

Activity 1.13: Conservation agreements signed – related to project benefits and conditionality of benefits

Instead of developing new 'conservation agreements', in September 2020 the project team discussed with local people and forest protection units / forest owners in Kon Plong to understand current village level regulations and the forest protection commitments already signed between communities, forest owners and forest protection units.

Almost all villages have village regulations on forest protection and commitments within the forest protection contracts, with forest owners. In reality, with the contracts, there are many terms and related responsibilities that local people hardly remember and rarely follow. Normally, local ethnic minority people will strictly follow (their own) village regulations, agreed amongst village members more than any other 'legal' regulations. Therefore, the project decided to work with each village management board to figure out the gaps relating to wildlife and forest protection, if any, in current village regulations. The project team facilitated this discussion to update a new version of village regulations which covered some additional terms of forest and wildlife protection. The head of each village presented the results of discussion at the village meetings to get opinions and feedback from villagers. Main contents of the new (i.e. revised) local forest protection commitments included:

- Restricting the use of timber for only traditional house construction. And/or using other alternative materials such as cement to build the house;
- No cutting timber for sale (while falsely claiming that the reason is making a house);
- No expansion of cultivated areas into the mature forest; and local people need to ask the permission from forest owners and village leaders before re-cultivating on old fields (on fallows and secondary forest);
- No collecting or using rare and threatened NTFPs;
- No hunting and trapping of wild animal species in key or core zones;
- Restricting the use of chemical herbicide on their farms;
- Restricting the hunting and use of common wild animal species, like rats or wild pigs.

These commitments will now be reviewed and signed by the village heads, forest owners, local FPDs, and Commune People's Committees.

Activity 1.17: Establish local, volunteer wildlife trade network and undertake annual (at least) market assessments

The project maintains a Facebook group for the volunteer network to update any relevant news regarding wildlife trade in Kon Plong. In June and July 2020 in combination with awareness raising activities [Act. 1.11], 53 volunteers with 43 males of 5 clubs from Dak Tang, Dak Ring, Mang Canh, Mang But and Ngoc Tem commune were invited to a short training on communication skills. The training was to provide knowledge and skills in raising awareness about forest and wildlife values, how human behaviours that affect the forest and wildlife, regulations and laws related to violations on forest and wildlife. After the training course, some volunteers have been able to organise raising awareness activities in targeted villages [Activity 1.11] with support from the project team, as well as undertaking basic, ad hoc surveys of the local wet markets and restaurants.

The project team used pre and post questionnaire to evaluate participant capacity and knowledge before and after the training. Regarding knowledge improvement, the number of right answer on the post-questionnaires of volunteers after the training improved. Half of that participants have not participated in any communication activities, or any training courses before. In conclusion, it is necessary to keep enhancing capacity for the volunteers to help those local people become more effective community facilitators or communicators in the future.

Activity 2.1: Policy review related to sub-national development plans and goals, related law / policy at national and local levels, pertaining to land use, etc.

The project has completed a thorough review of policies related to sub-national development plans and goals. The final report was developed and submitted to the project by policy consultant. The report provided an overview of policy issues and legal regulations including the implementation of foreign commitments signed regarding to biodiversity conservation and management; policy and legal regulation system on forest management, biodiversity conservation, land use and related fields in Vietnam. In addition, the report also listed high priority issues need to be solved and some recommendations relating to the process of PA gazettement. This report was very useful, especially to share with local stakeholders for further reference before making the decision change the category of Kon Plong forest, i.e. to an SUF (PA).

Activity 2.2: Policy development process (briefings, study tours and seminars), which aims to facilitate the land use planning and protected area gazettement

The 10-page policy briefing has been developed and delivered to participants in the conservation workshop on 24th July 2020. The briefing provides an overview on the current context of Kon Plong forest, related regulations supporting the gazettement process of a new protected area, recommendations to fill the gaps in terms of sustainable financing plans and human resources (staff) for the operation of the new protected area.

Activity 3.3: Impact assessment(s) and related development of the safeguards / monitoring and grievance mechanism

In combination with [Activity 1.1] above, from 25th September to 2nd October 2020 the project facilitated a review of safeguard issues and developed the grievance mechanism. It was proposed that the new 'monitoring and grievance board' will include one leader, two vice leaders and 08 members. To date, the project has received no major concerns, complaints or grievances from local communities. The project will further involve local farmers in sustainable livelihood development planning and pilot livelihood models during PY3.

Activity 3.5: Improve market access through visioning (building on theory of change exercises) and Participatory Market Systems Development (PMSD)

The project conducted a thorough review of existing farming systems at the end of 2019. The results and technical report have been shared in a meeting on 26th May 2020 with representatives from Kon Plong FPD, Department of Agriculture & Rural Development, Farmer's Union and Women's Union. During this trip from 25th May to 1st June 2020, the project also created 9 key farmer groups at 9 target villages with total of 194 members (98 women). For each group has one leader and one vice leader who latter will work close with project and help group members.

The project organised group discussions with the new 'farmer group' members to map and plan ways to further and more deeply improve livelihood within the specific context of each village. The project will provide technical support to the livelihood interventions to these groups. In October 2020, the project developed a livelihood development strategy and interventions aiming to improve the capacity, knowledge and cognitive change of key farmer groups in cultivation way through short training and group discussions. Next steps are that the project will facilitate discussions around possible ways to remove barriers and improve market access, and will undertake a full PMSD process with these target groups in November 2020.

Activity 3.8: An eco-stove design and procurement programme to reduce local fuel wood requirements

The TK90 fuelwood saving stove is a type of eco-stove that has proven its efficiency and effectiveness in reducing fuelwood at all FFI's other project sites in Vietnam. Therefore, the project chose this fuel-efficient stove to introduce and pilot in Kon Plong District. In May 2020, the project brought a TK90 eco-stove as a model to demonstrate to all the target villages through group discussions and encouraged local people to use this stove. Later, from 2nd to 4th October 2020, 90 stoves including 50 small size stoves and 40 average size stoves were ordered and delivered to 04 villages included Dak Tang village of Dak Tang Commune, Dak Cho village of Dak Ring Commune, Mang Ri village of Ngoc Tem Commune and Mang Canh village of Mang Canh Commune.

The project piloted 10 average size stoves and 10 small size stoves at each village at those households who registered and willing to pilot. The project delivered 10 small size stoves to forest ranger stations to use with aim to encourage more local households to use the stoves. The project team also conducted a rapid assessment to gather information on fuelwood volume of each household before using these stoves. The assessment will be repeated after 6 months to evaluate the effectiveness in reducing the fuelwood demand of these households.

In general, it is difficult to assess the amount of fuelwood that each household use per week and per season. According to most of local people, a mixture of different types of dry trees/branches are collected as fuelwood. Before receiving stoves, village leaders and households committed to use stoves safety, provide data on fuelwood use and to protect the forest.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months (for Covid-19 specific delays/problems, please use 2b). Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

At this stage, within limited budget and human resource, the project has mainly worked in 10 (now 09) target villages of 4 communes which were considered will be most impacted by and/or a threat to the proposed protected area, in terms of access and natural resources use. There are many other villages having livelihoods that in some way include natural forest resources too. It is therefore suggested that FFI and GreenViet should seek for more funding and potentially extend community work into more villages in the region, in the longer-term.

One notable case in the project site that drew attention of all authorities was the illegal timber exploitation for house construction of 11 residents in Dak Cho village. Despite there actually being a nation-wide moratorium on logging in all natural forests, this has been somewhat ineffectual in the local context, when it comes to traditional house building; Local people need timber for their house construction and often have no viable alternative. As such, forest owners, People's committee, local rangers and villages have verbally created conditions for that need to be met, but under their strict control (but without documented records). This led to the situation getting out of control quickly and created a significant impact (area of deforestation) on a large hill near the village.

Another investigation has been raised to investigate some households in Vi Ring village due to their actions of expanding into more natural forest for cultivation. The project aimed to understand the reality and find ways to local people them but the stressful and antagonistic atmosphere

between them and local authorities has created barriers, and in often times they do not want to attend meetings.

Finally, the project has developed a livelihood development strategy which identified many necessary interventions. To improvement of local livelihoods, incomes and wellbeing in general, it will need time with further financial and technical support from project. At this stage, the project will only be able to help with building capacity for key farmers through group trainings and meetings, and facilitate the dual processes of market barrier removal (PMSD) and land use planning. FFI will seek additional funding to further support livelihood improvements, as it is the major concern of local stakeholders and communities.

In terms of project personnel, the project coordinator of GreenViet, Ms. Nguyen Thi Thien Huong is on maternity leave from September 2020. GreenViet has assigned another project coordinator Mr. Tran Huu Vy, who has been following and monitoring project activities from the beginning and therefore the project and therefore this may not create any issue in project activity implementation.

2b. Please outline any specific issues which your project has encountered as a result of Covid-19. Where you have adapted your project activities in response to the pandemic, please briefly outline how you have done so here. Explain what residual impact there may be on your project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

During this 6-month reporting period, Vietnam encountered two waves of Covid-19 pandemic leading to the national lockdown in April and the lockdown of Da Nang City (and partial lockdown nation-wide) in August. After the first lockdown, everything was delayed and it took several weeks to get back to a normal. Travel remained very restricted, therefore the project was only able to conduct limited field work by the end of May. It was forbidden to have meetings with more than 20 participants and therefore the project was unable to organise any meetings with communities and organise workshop during and for several weeks after the lockdown. One of the notable activities during this period was the workshop “Biodiversity conservation associates with sustainable livelihood development”. This workshop was proposed first in March 2020 but then due to the impact of Covid-19 pandemic it was delayed several times and luckily the project successfully organised this workshop in late July right before the second wave of Covid pandemic in Vietnam. One day after this workshop, Vietnam faced the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic. The project staff members were stuck in their hometowns for one month while GreenViet’s team was stuck in Da Nang City as well. Working from home was in place and therefore the project changed the format of working to online meetings and work-planning. The project staff mainly focused on completing technical and field trip reports and preparing for field activities.

Although the impact of Covid-19 pandemic created many consequential delays for some activities, the project is confident to catch up all planned activities to deliver project objective during next six months.

2c. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

No

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 25-001 Darwin Half Year Report**